AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Canceled)

2. (New) An improved integrated head assembly for a nuclear reactor having a reactor vessel closure head with a plurality of lifting lugs, the integrated head assembly of the type having a plurality of lug-engaging lift rods that extend upwardly from the reactor vessel closure head, a ring beam supported by the reactor vessel closure head, a shroud assembly supported by the ring beam, a control rod seismic support assembly, and a plurality of fans, wherein the improvement comprises:

a missile shield assembly, including a plurality of shield plates that are slidably retained in a horizontal array directly over the reactor vessel closure head.

3. (New) The improved integrated head assembly of Claim 2, wherein the shield plates are slidably retained in an array defined by a plurality of parallel slotted beams.

4. (New) The improved integrated head assembly of Claim 2, further comprising a plurality of work platforms disposed about the array of shield plates.

5. (New) The improved integrated head assembly of Claim 2, wherein each of the shield plates further comprises a handle extending upwardly from the shield plate, wherein the handle facilitates sliding and removing the shield plate.

6. (New) The improved integrated head assembly of Claim 3, wherein each of the plurality of parallel slotted beams includes a removable frame member that provides an opening to facilitate removal of at least some of the shield plates when the frame member is removed.

7. (New) The improved integrated head assembly of Claim 2, wherein the shield plates are individually removable such that a majority of the missile shield may remain in place while accessing a region under the missile shield assembly from above.

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1420 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2800
Seattle, Washington 98101
206.682.8100

8. (New) A missile shield assembly for a nuclear reactor, the nuclear reactor including a reactor vessel closure head that supports a plurality of control rod drive mechanisms, the missile shield assembly comprising:

a plurality of shield plates that are slidably retained in a horizontal array directly over the control rod drive mechanisms supported by the reactor vessel closure head.

9. (New) The missile shield assembly of Claim 8, wherein the shield plates are slidably retained in an array defined by a plurality of parallel slotted beams.

10. (New) The missile shield assembly of Claim 8, further comprising a plurality of work platforms disposed about the array of shield plates.

11. (New) The missile shield assembly of Claim 8, wherein each of the shield plates further comprises a handle extending upwardly from the shield plate, wherein the handle facilitates sliding and removing the shield plate.

12. (New) The missile shield assembly of Claim 9, wherein each of the plurality of parallel slotted beams includes a removable frame member that provides an opening to facilitate removal of at least some of the shield plates when the frame member is removed.

13. (New) The missile shield assembly of Claim 8, wherein the shield plates are individually removable such that a majority of the missile shield may remain in place while accessing a region under the missile shield assembly from above.

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